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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 KUWAIT 000807

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TAGS: [PARM](#) [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [ECON](#) [IR](#) [IZ](#) [KU](#)  
SUBJECT: FOREIGN MINISTER DISCUSSES IRAN, IRAQI SUNNIS,  
HAMAS, AND AMRE MOUSSA

REF: A. KUWAIT 748

[1](#)B. KUWAIT 678  
[1](#)C. KUWAIT 677  
[1](#)D. KUWAIT 676  
[1](#)E. STATE 27174

Classified By: Ambassador Richard LeBaron for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d)

[1](#)1. (C) Summary: During a March 8 meeting with Ambassador, Foreign Minister Shaykh Dr. Mohammed Al-Salem Al-Sabah repeated a request he made to the Secretary soliciting U.S. support for a nuclear-free zone in the Gulf in addition to a proposed anti-bigotry resolution at the UNGA. Shaykh Dr. Mohammed also discussed Kuwaiti-Iranian relations, saying the recent visit to Kuwait by the Iranian President did not produce any positive results. He emphasized GOK engagement with Iraqi Sunnis, noting calls by Iraqi Sunni visitors to Kuwait for representation in the new government that does more than reflect their vote count in the last election. The FM predicted Hamas could signal acceptance of the peace process in connection with the next Arab League Summit, perhaps by accepting the plan proposed by then CP Abdullah last year. As for the new Secretary General of the Arab League, the GOK would only support Amre Moussa were Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak to make a "very passionate plea," and this only because Mubarak is held in high esteem in Kuwait. The FM advised that Amir Shaykh Sabah will make a tour of GCC countries starting next week. (End summary)

Call for U.S. Support on Nuclear-Free Zone, UN Resolution  
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[1](#)2. (C) Repeating a message he personally delivered to the Secretary when she met recently with GCC Foreign Ministers in

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the UAE, Foreign Minister Shaykh Dr. Mohammed Al-Salem Al-Sabah told the Ambassador March 8 that the GOK would like the U.S. to support a GCC initiative to establish a nuclear-free zone in the Gulf. He also said it was important that the U.S. enunciate more vocally its support for an overall WMD free zone in the Middle East. This would demonstrate that the U.S. has no double standard on the issue, and make arguments against the Iranian actions easier to make.

[1](#)3. (C) Shaykh Dr. Mohammed also renewed his call for the introduction of a UNGA resolution to admonish against bigotry and xenophobia. Since the U.S. has been active to fight anti-Semitism through the UN's "Holocaust resolution," the Foreign Minister added, why not protect all religions (in the context of the Danish cartoon controversy). "We want to see the U.S. champion this idea," he concluded. Dr. Mohamed said

that no particular religion would need to be named in the resolution. The Ambassador reiterated arguments that DAS Gray had made against such a resolution in a meeting with the Kuwaiti Ambassador. (Note: It was clear that Dr. Mohammed felt strongly about the efficacy of such a resolution and is not prepared to drop the matter.)

#### Shaykh Sabah Schools Ahmadinejad on Leadership

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¶4. (C) The FM reported that Iran's nuclear program was the GOK's top agenda item during President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad's February 27 visit to Kuwait (ref C). Amir Shaykh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, according to Shaykh Dr. Mohammed, was "blunt" during conversations with his Iranian counterpart and urged Ahmadinejad to exercise wisdom in handling the nuclear issue. The Amir reportedly said that Ahmadinejad, despite his popular support, should now lead and not be led by people on the street who do not see the totality of the situation. Ahmadinejad responded that it was within Iran's rights to develop nuclear technology and that his government would share such technology with its neighbors and the Islamic world. The Iranian President proposed establishing a nuclear joint venture with its Gulf neighbors to allay their fears. The GOK, the Minister recounted, did not respond to this "preposterous" idea. The Iranians "cannot play politics of extortion with us," Shaykh Dr. Mohammed commented.

¶5. (C) Dr. Mohammed noted that no progress was made on the Kuwaiti/Iranian disagreement about the offshore continental shelf boundary. He hoped that recent gas discoveries in Kuwait would indirectly prod the Iranians to stop stalling in negotiations on the continental shelf issue.

¶6. (C) Shaykh Dr. Mohammed reported that the only minister-level representative in Ahmadinejad's delegation was Minister of Energy Parviz Fattah. He was somewhat surprised

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that Iranian Foreign Minister Manouchehr Mottaki was absent.

#### GOK Engaging Iraqi Sunnis

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¶7. (C) The Amir received on March 6 Adnan Mohammed Al-Dulaimi, leader of the Iraqi Accordance Front, the largest Sunni parliamentary bloc. The GOK decided to engage Iraqi Sunnis more regularly after the Cairo Conference, sending them, in the FM's word, a simple message: "you made a strategic mistake by boycotting the elections, and now everyone is paying the price." According to Shaykh Dr. Mohammed, the Sunnis now realize this. The GOK is encouraging the Sunnis to participate fully in the Iraqi government.

¶8. (C) The Iraqi Sunnis, the FM reported, are soliciting help from the GOK. They complain of the sectarian policies of Prime Minister Ibrahim Al-Jaafari's government including intimidation and perceived "voting irregularities" during the latest elections. The GOK hopes that the Iraqi government will embrace inclusion and reconciliation. According to Dr. Mohammed, the Sunni leaders are telling the GOK that their place in the government being formed should be more significant than merely a reflection of the percentage of the popular vote they received in the election. As long as the Sunnis remain fully engaged in the political process, the GOK will support them, the FM pledged. The GOK also enjoys good relations with the Iraqi Shi'a, he added. While trying to help, the Kuwaitis do not want their actions to be seen as interfering in internal Iraqi politics. The FM expects other Sunni groups in addition to Shi'a and Kurdish delegations to visit Kuwait soon.

#### FM Predicts Hamas to Participate in Peace Process

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¶9. (C) Ambassador delivered ref E talking points regarding Hamas, urging the GOK to send a strong signal to Hamas to engage with the Quartet. He also emphasized a U.S. request that the GOK not deal with the Palestinian organization on a political level. Shaykh Dr. Mohammed repeated what he already told the Secretary: the GCC is giving Hamas time as it repositions itself for an eventual acceptance of the peace process. The FM predicted that Hamas would in some way buy into the peace process in connection with the upcoming Arab League summit, citing pressure from Arab governments to accept Saudi King Abdullah's previous peace proposal as cover.

No Love Lost for Moussa  
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¶10. (C) Shaykh Dr. Mohammed expressed GOK dissatisfaction with Arab League Secretary General Amr Moussa (ref A), adding that "we don't hide our disagreement with him." He identified waste and corruption as two areas of concern in Moussa's organization. Politically, the GOK had "serious disagreement" with Moussa over his attempt to rehabilitate Saddam Hussein's regime. Now that Moussa's term is expiring, the Minister continued, it is not a secret that Arab governments want to see another figure head the Arab League. The Minister noted Algeria's proposal to rotate the leadership among the League's geographical regions. however, the Kuwaitis are not prepared to support the idea at this time. "We don't want to weaken Hosni Mubarak," whom Dr. Mohammed labeled a "good friend" and "reliable ally to the Gulf." The only way the GOK would support another Moussa term, Dr. Mohammed concluded, would be if Mubarak made a "passionate plea...a very passionate plea."

Al-Askariya Mosque and the Amir's Travel Plans  
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¶11. (C) Ambassador shared Washington's appreciation of Kuwait's offer to help fund rebuilding the Shi'a Al-Askariya mosque in Samarra, the target of a February 22 bombing (ref B). The FM reported that the Amir is to visit all of the GCC countries next week.  
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